

Reduce your carbon footprint:

- Turn off lights & unplug appliances when you leave the room
- Unplug your cell phone as soon as it is charged
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with energy-efficient bulbs.
- Hang your clothes to dry when possible & use the dryer less
- Take shorter showers & turn off water when shaving, & brushing your teeth
- Use biodegradable soaps & shampoos
- Where possible use tap water not bottled water. Use jugs & glasses at meetings
- Purchase recycled products whenever possible
- Ride a bike, walk, carpool, or use public transportation whenever possible
- Take reusable cloth bags when shopping instead of using disposable plastic bags
- Buy local, &/or organic food & patronize local farmers' markets when possible
- Eat less meat: the UN concludes that "the livestock sector emerges as one of the top two or three most significant contributors to the most serious environmental problems," including climate change
- Visit local Fair Trade websites: the Vancouver Archdiocese Office of Service and Justice; Just Coffee® & Fair Trade Vancouver websites (see below). You can buy, support and even fundraise with coffee, tea, sugar & chocolate & other products. Most Fair Trade farmers are organic and care for Creation and are paid a fair price or a living wage to support their families & communities
- Reduce use of disposable products by using reusable containers; if you must buy disposable, buy products made from recycled & recyclable material
- Organize an environmental awareness day at your parish, school or fraternity
- Plant a garden & start a compost pile
- Buy & use an apartment balcony worm composter (see websites below)
- Write to, or meet with, your MP, MLA & municipal councillors and urge them to act with urgency and put Care for Creation, the poor, & the common good ahead of short-term special interests
- Encourage your community to support public transit & other alternatives (e.g. car pools) to personal cars for commuting
- Consider the footprint of products before you buy them: from resource extraction, to production, distribution, consumption, & disposal
- Consider the social and environmental cost of goods & service: Who is making this product? How and where is this made? Using what resources? Are living wages paid? Are working conditions adequate? How long will it last?
- Reflect on ways to simplify your life: What are my needs vs. wants? How might I reduce the amount of resources I consume?
- Learn about Catholic Social Teaching on the environment and share the good news that Catholics are called to Care for Creation, care for the poor, seek the common good & respect all life. Read the pastoral letters linked below